R.W. Chadbourn Place
Columbus

Interior displays include authentic horse carriages and Main Street style facades

History of Project

The historic First National Bank building had been vacated and was put up for sale by its most recent occupant, Associated Bank. The ground floor of the building had always been used for a lobby and teller space, and the second floor housed banking offices. Once Associated Bank left, the interior was left an unfinished shell. After attending a seminar on community initiated development, Columbus Main Street decided to purchase the building and gathered community support for its restoration. The building was then renamed R.W. Chadbourn Place, in honor of the bank's original founder. With volunteers and major community cooperation, work began to bring the building back to a marketable condition.

Scope of Project

Phase one of the project involved converting the second story office space into three one-bedroom apartments, which rented quickly. Phase two was restoring the ground floor. This was the most challenging because of the poor condition of the space. During that time, The Frey Group had been talking with Columbus Main Street about a new location for their horse/carriage showroom. Columbus Main Street then asked The Frey Group to look at the ground floor space, and after working out a game plan for it, the Frey's purchased the building, and in 1999.

The Frey Group began work immediately. The original bank vault was restored and converted into sales space for gifts, artwork, and books. In the main space, the Frey's replicated a small turn-of-the-century village, complete with historic-looking facades, and of course, carriages. These unique spaces act as display areas for merchandise, most of which are horse-and-carriage related. After two years of renovation, R.W. Chadbourn Place opened its doors in November of 2001. Visitors and residents of Columbus consider this unique store a "must-see."

Close-up view of interior facades and displays.